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Identical letters dated 15 March 2012 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I should like to point out the following:

On the morning of 12 March 2012, terrorist groups carried out another horrific massacre in certain districts of the city of Homs, resulting in the deaths of some 45 civilians, not to mention the atrocities which those groups have perpetrated in other parts of Syria. The terrorist groups have taken to carrying out such massacres and blaming them on the Government shortly before the United Nations Security Council or the Human Rights Council meet to discuss the situation in the Middle East or Syria. Their aim is to denigrate Syria and to use this and other tragedies as media fodder. The terrorists slaughtered the innocent civilians and took pictures, which they sent to television and satellite channels complicit in misinformation and agitation. Such activities are inconsistent with journalistic objectivity: they distort the facts and support terrorism. The competent authorities have detained a number of the terrorists, who have confessed to committing those acts.

Information provided by the victims' families and their relatives shows that all of the youths, women and children who perished had been kidnapped and murdered shortly beforehand by armed terrorist groups. They had opposed the terrorist groups' activities and refused to submit to their schemes. In particular, many had been identified by the terrorists as supporters of the State.

The fatwas issued by certain clerics in Arab States, and their incitement to military intervention in Syria, are directly behind the causes of the massacres in Homs and other Syrian governorates.

The Syrian Arab Republic calls on all States and organizations that combat terrorism to take a stand against the killing, bloodshed and strife, and to press the well-known parties to end their support for terrorism. In accordance with the counter-terrorism resolutions of the Security Council, they should help to end the shedding of Syrian blood and hold accountable those States and actors that sponsor terrorism in Syria.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic stresses that it is fulfilling its duty to protect its citizens, disarm the terrorists and hold the perpetrators accountable. It is pursuing its endeavours to find a political solution to the crisis in Syria by cooperating with Special Envoy Kofi Annan and building on the range of democratic achievements that began in March of last year. Those achievements

include the lifting of the state of emergency; the issuance of laws on political pluralism, local elections and freedom of the media; actions to address the economic situation of citizens; the promulgation of a new constitution; and other measures to promote political life and foster pluralism and democracy towards the inception of a comprehensive reform process. Syria has chosen to confront the problems facing it through political dialogue. Members of the opposition and independents are helping to tackle the issues of concern and restore security and stability in Syria.

Syria expresses its hope that States Members of the United Nations and all relevant United Nations agencies will share that approach to tackling the current crisis in Syria, and that they will work to end the violence, prevent foreign funding of terrorism and restore security and stability.

I should be grateful if this letter could be circulated as an official document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Bashar **Ja'afari**
Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations